

THE  
SENSE  
OF THE  
Church of *England*  
With Respect to the SCHISM of the  
DISSENTERS.

Wherein their CASE is  
fully Stated, and the BILL now  
depending consider'd.

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Most humbly offer'd to the Con-  
sideration of My Lords the BISHOPS.

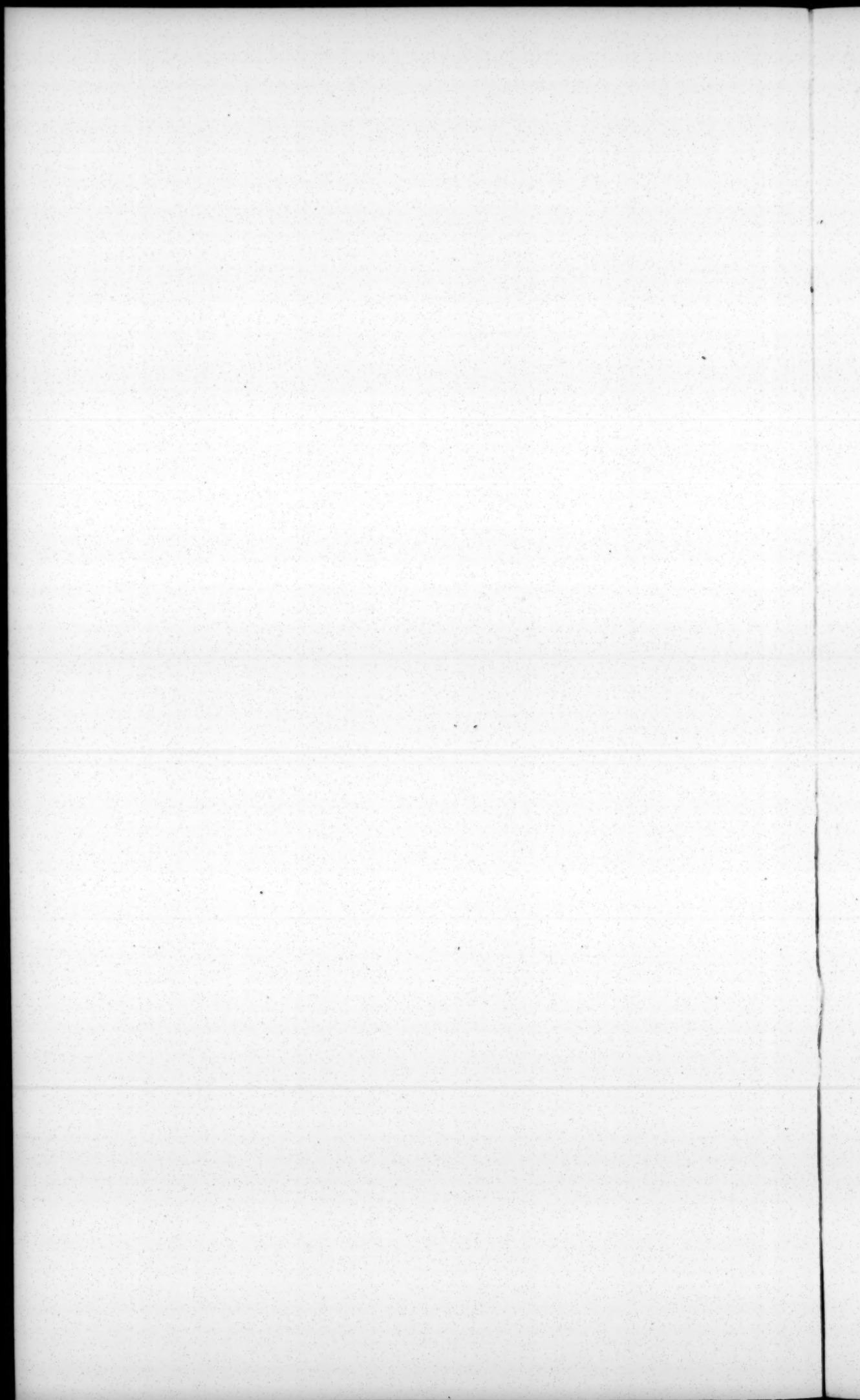
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By a CHURCHMAN.

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LONDON:

Printed for N. Cliff at the Bible and Three  
Crowns in *Cheapside*; And Sold by J. Roberts  
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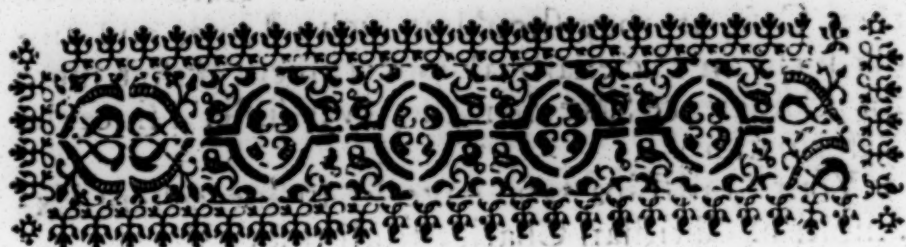
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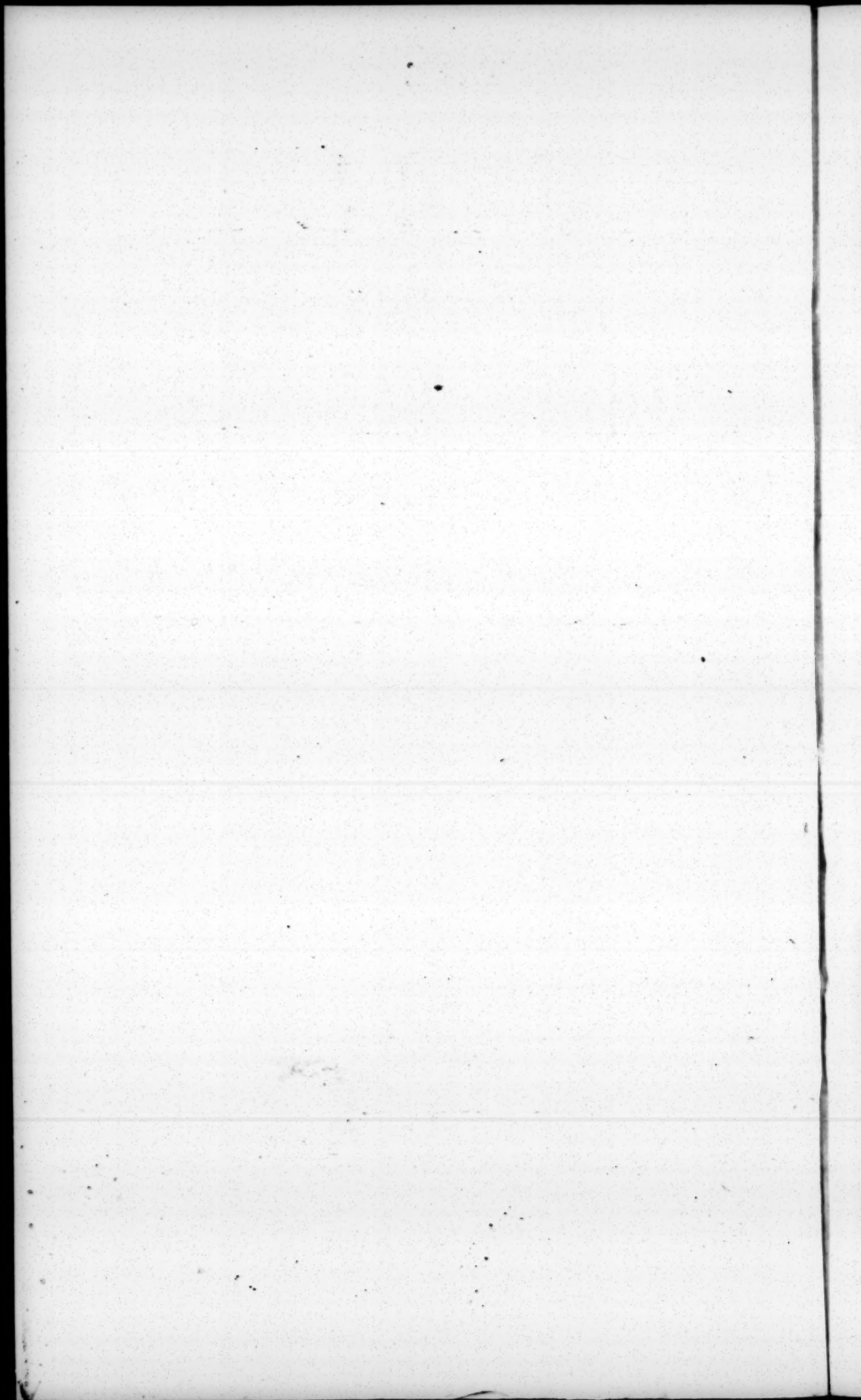


AMONG all the happy Consequences of the Glorious *Revolution* which deliver'd us from King *James*, from *Popery* and *Slavery*; the greatest Blessing that has attended it has been the filling the Sees of the Church of *England* with Men of Your Lordships Piety, Learning, Wisdom and Moderation. And those who have been so unhappy as to differ from us in Indifferent Matters, have yet on all Occasions blest the good Providence of God for giving their Protestant Brethren of the Legal Establishment such

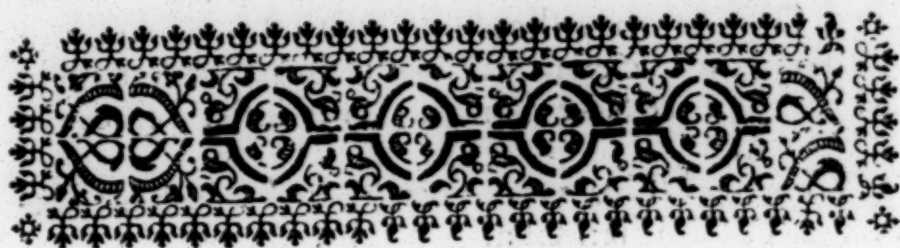
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Worthy









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Worthy and Religious Governors. Hard will be their Case, if they shou'd at such a Time, and under such an Ecclesiastical Government suffer more for Conscience Sake than they ever suffer'd since the Reformation.

Your Lordships who have set such excellent Examples of Christian Charity to all under Your Care, cannot see, without extream Concern, see your holy Counsels have so little Effect on the Minds of the most Zealous Sons of our Church, and that their Zeal wou'd transport them to break in upon the Birth right of their Fellow Subjects and Fellow Christians.

I shall not presume to trouble your Lordships with Reasons to prove that an entire Liberty of Conscience is the Birth right of every *British* Subject, that the Laws of God and Nature have establish'd it, and every Invasion of that Right is a breach of them. You are too well acquainted with the Argument to need any Light in it; but will, I hope, Pardon me if I take the Liberty to remind you of the Opinion and Practice of the greatest Ornaments and Pillars of our Church and Nation in a Matter which so much concerns the Peace and Welfare of this Kingdom. Not that your Lordships Judgement need to be directed by other Authority than your own, or that any of this kind is greater. But I doubt not when your Lordships remember with what a Spirit of Truth, Wisdom and Piety this Debate has been handled by your Reverend Predecessors, and others of other Countries as well as our own, it will confirm you in the Good and Generous Resolutions you may have taken to prevent the Dispair and Misery of so many Thousand Protestant Families as will be affected by the Law that is on Foot against them. It wou'd be very Impertinent to go about to explain to your Lordships that Schism in the Church Sense of it does not extend to our Protestant Dissenters, who disagree with us not in the Essentials of Religion and Points tending to Salvation. Yet that Disagreement wou'd make Conformity Criminal to them, if it were a-  
gainst

gainst their Conscience, which therefore ought to be indulg'd for the good of their Souls and the Peace of the Publick.

It has been thought a little Vain in us to pretend to a Purity of Religion above all other Protestant Churches in *Europe*, and as the far greater part of Protestants come nearer in Matters of Doctrine and Discipline to those of the Dissenters that differ least from the Church than to the Church herself. It is not so clear as in such a Case one wou'd have it be, that the greater Number are in a Schism from the less.

Shou'd we enter into the Historical Account of our Reformation, we shall find that the first Dissension from the Church of *Rome* was Condemn'd by the very same Arguments that are made use of by the Enemies to our Protestant Dissenters. And what Your Lordships very Reverend and Learned Brother Dr. *Stillington* has said on this Occasion in his *Irenicum*, proves this and defines Schism beyond all Manner of doubt or difficulty: *Let Men turn and wind themselves which way they will*, says he, *by the very same Arguments that any will prove Separation from the Church of Rome Lawful, because she required unlawful Things, as Conditions of her Communion, it will be prov'd Lawful not to conform to any suspected or unlawful Practice, required by any Church Governors upon the same Terms; If the Thing so required be after serious and sober Enquiry, judg'd unwarrantable by a Man's own Conscience. And withal it would be further considered; whether when our best Writers against the Papists, do lay the Imputation of Schism not on those who withdraw Communion, but on them for requiring such Communion, (whereby they did rather eject Men out of their Communion, than the other separate from them) they do not by the same Arguments lay the Imputation of Schism on all who require such Conditions of Communion, and take it wholly off from those who refuse to Conform for Conscience Sake.*

If this is not the Case of our Non-conformists, that Learned Prelate is as well mistaken as my self; for it is not to be doubted but he intended them



not only in this, but in the following Discourse on this Subject preceeding to it :

“ **W**HERE any Church, retaining the Purity of Doctrine, doth require the owning of, and conforming to, any unlawful or suspected Practice, Men may lawfully deny Conformity to, and Communion with that Church in such Things, without incurring the Guilt of Schism. I say not, Men may proceed to Positive Schism as it is called, that is, erecting of New Churches, which from *Cyprian* is call'd *erigere Altare contra Altare*; but only that withdrawing Communion from a Church in unlawful or suspected Things. doth not lay Men under the Guilt of Schism : Which because I know may meet with some Opposition from those Men, who will sooner call Men Schismatics than prove them so, I shall offer this Reason for it to Consideration. If our Separation from the Church of *Rome* was therefore lawful, because she required unlawful Things, as Conditions of her Communion, then wherever such Things are required by any Church, Non-Communion with that Church in those those Things will be lawful too; and where Non-Communion is lawful, there can be no Schism in it. Whatever difference will be thought of, as to the Things imposed by the Church of *Rome* and others, will be soon answered by the proportionable difference between bare Non-Conformity, and total and positive Separation. What was in it self lawful and necessary then, how comes it to be unlawful and unnecessary now? Did that justify our withdrawing from them, because they required Things unlawful, as Conditions of Communion; and will not the same justify other Mens Non-Conformity in Things supposed by them unlawful? If it be said here, that the Popes Power was Usurpation, which is not in lawful Governments of Churches; it is soon replied, That the Popes Usurpation mainly lies in imposing Things upon Mens Consciences as necessary, which are doubtful



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 Thing is done, there is an Usurpation of the same  
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 are bound to be ruled by their Governours in de-  
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 to this it is answered, First, No true Protestant  
 can swear blind Obedience to Church Governours  
 in all Things. It is the highest Usurpation to rob  
 Men of the Liberty of their Judgments ; that  
 which we plead for against the Papists, is, that all  
 Men have Eyes in their Heads as well as the Pope ;  
 that every one hath a *judicium privata Discretionis*,  
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*aliquid esse verum. quia vult credere id esse verum; non est enim in potestate Hominis facere aliquid apparere intellectui suo verum quando*

Picus Mi-  
rand. Apol. p.  
225, 226.

' *voluerit*. Either therefore Men are bound to obey  
 ' Church-Governours in all Things absolutely,  
 ' without any Restriction or Limitation (which  
 ' if it be not Usurpation and Dominion over others  
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 ' Things, I then enquire who must be judge what  
 ' Things are lawful, in this Case, what not? If  
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' Were we so happy but to take off Things  
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 ' nothing the Bonds of our Communion but what  
 ' Christ hath done, viz. one Faith, one Baptism,  
 ' &c. allowing a Liberty for Matters of Indifferen-  
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' fired to draw into their Communion, by coming  
 ' as near them as they well and safely could : And  
 ' certainly those Holy Men, who did seek by any  
 ' means to draw in others, at such a distance from  
 ' their Principles as the Papists were, did never in-  
 ' tend by what they did for that end, to exclude any  
 ' truly tender Consciences from their Communion.  
 ' That which they laid as a Bait for them, was ne-  
 ' ver intended as a Hook for those of their own Pro-  
 ' fession. But the same or greater Reason which  
 ' made them seek so much at that time (before the  
 ' Rent between the Papists and us was grown to  
 ' that heighth it is now at ; they being in hopes by a  
 ' fair Compliance to have brought the whole King-  
 ' dom to joyn with them) I say the same Reason  
 ' which at that time made them yield so far to them  
 ' then, would now have perswaded them to alter and  
 ' lay aside those Things which yield matter of Of-  
 ' fence, to any of the same Profession with them-  
 ' selves now. For surely none will be so unchari-  
 ' table towards those of his own Profession, as not  
 ' to think there is as much reason to yield in Com-  
 ' pliance with them, as with the Papists. And  
 ' it cannot but be looked upon as a Token of God's  
 ' severe Displeasure against us, if any, tho' un-  
 ' reasonable Proposals of Peace between us and the  
 ' Papists, should meet with such Entertainment a-  
 ' mongst many ; and yet any fair Offers of Union  
 ' and Accomodation among ourselves, be so cold-  
 ' ly embraced and entertained.

How far, my Lords, it is from offers of Union  
 and Accommodation to lay new Restraints and  
 Penalties on those who differ from us for Con-  
 science Sake, to take from them what is dearer to  
 them then any Thing but their Conscience, the Di-  
 rection of their Childrens Education. To the Au-  
 thority of the Bishop of *Worcester*, I shall subjoyn  
 that of the Reverend Mr. *Hales* of *Eaten*, whose  
 Learning, Piety and good Sense gave a Sanction  
 to every Thing he said. He wrote a little Tract on  
 Schism, and it contains the following Reflections.

' In those Schisms which concern Fact, nothing  
 ' can be a just Cause of refusing Communion, but  
 ' only to require the Execution of some un-  
 lawful



• law or suspected Act; for not only in Reason but  
 • in Religion too, that Maxim admits of no release,  
 • *cantissimi cujusque praeceptum quod dubitas, ne fece-*  
 • *ris.* And after instanteth in the Schism about I-  
 • mage-Worship, determinated by the second Coun-  
 • cil of *Nice*, in which he pronounceth the Schif-  
 • matical Party to be the Synod it self, and that on  
 • these Grounds, *First*, Because it is acknowledged  
 • by all, that it is a thing not necessary, *Sceondly*,  
 • It is by most suspected. *Thirdly*, It is by many  
 • held utterly unlawful. Can then, saith he, the  
 • enjoying of such a Thing be ought else but Abuse?  
 • Or can the refusal of Communion here, be thought  
 • any other Thing than Duty? Here, or upon the  
 • like occasion, to separate, may Paradvventure bring  
 • personal Trouble or Danger (against which it con-  
 • cerns any Honest Man to have *Pectus prae paratum*;)   
 • further Harm it cannot do: So that in these Cases  
 • you cannot be to seek what to think, or what you  
 • have to do. And afterwards he propounds it as a  
 • Remedy to prevent Schism, to have all Liturgies  
 • and publick Forms of Service so framed, as that  
 • they admit not of particular or private Fancie, but  
 • contain only such Things as all Christians do agree  
 • in. For consider of all the Liturgies that are, and  
 • ever have been, and remove from them whatever  
 • is scandalous to any Party, and leave nothing but  
 • what all agree on; and the Evil shall be, that the  
 • publick Service and Honour of God shall no way  
 • suffer: Whereas, to load our publick Forms, with  
 • the private Fancies upon which we differ, is the  
 • most soveraign Way to perpetuate Schism unto the  
 • World's End. Prayer, Confession, Thanksgiving,  
 • reading the Scriptures in the plaine and simplest  
 • Manner, were matter enough to furnish out a suf-  
 • ficient Liturgy, tho' nothing either of private Opi-  
 • nion, or of Church Pomp, of Garments or pre-  
 • scrib'd Gestures, of Imagery, of Musick, of Mat-  
 • ter concerning the Dead, or of many Superfluities  
 • which creep into the Church, under the Name of  
 • Order and Decency, did interpose it self. To  
 • charge Churches and Liturgies with Things un-  
 • necessary, was the first Beginning of all Supersti-  
 • tion; and when Scruple of Conscience began to

' be made or pretended, then Schism began to break  
 ' in; if the Spiritual Guides and Fathers of the  
 ' Church, would be a little sparing of incumbring  
 ' Churches with Superfluities, or not over-rigid,  
 ' either in reviving absolute Customs, or imposing  
 ' new, there would be far less Cause of Schism or  
 ' Superstition; and all the Inconveniencies were  
 ' likely to ensue, would be but this, they would  
 ' in so doing yield a little to the Imbecility of their  
 ' Inferiours, a thing which St. Paul would never  
 ' have refused to do: Mean while, wheresoever false  
 ' or suspected Opinions are made a piece of Church Li-  
 ' turgy, he that separates is not the Schismatick; for  
 ' it is alike unlawful to make a Profession of known  
 ' or suspected Falshood, as to put in Practice un-  
 ' lawful or suspected Actions.

The Learned and Reverend Dr. Jackson, acquits  
*those of Schism who withdraw from that Church which*  
*impose Rights and Customs that Cross the Rule of Faith*  
*and Charity. And Bishop Bramhall says, speaking*  
*of Schism, When there is a mutual Division of two*  
*Parts or Members of the Mystical Body of Christ one*  
*from the other, yet both retaining Communion with*  
*the Church Universal, quam eunque partem amplexis*  
*fueris Schismaticus non audies quippe quod Univer-*  
*sa Ecclesia neutram damnavit. Which side soever*  
*you close with you shall not be reproach'd for a Schis-*  
*matick, because the Universal Church has condemned*  
*neither side. He adds, That is was not the Erroneous*  
*Opinions of the Church of Rome, but the obtruding*  
*them by Laws upon other Churches that warranted a*  
*Seperation. It would be too tedious and imperti-*  
*nent to add any thing to what these great Lumi-*  
*naries of our Church have said to this purpose. Nor*  
*do their great Names give more Reputation to the*  
*Christian Temper they profess, than the Weight*  
*and Truth of their Arguments. It will not, how-*  
*ever, be amiss to add the Sentiments of some Learned*  
*and Noble Laymen on this Subject, which is now in*  
*Debate before your Lordships and the House of Peers.*  
 The Lord Verulam tells us, *'Tis a sign of Exasperation*  
*to condemn the contrary Part as a Sect; yea, and some*  
*undiscreet Persons have been bold in open Preaching,*  
*to use dishonourable and derogatory Speeches and Cen-*  
*sures*



*tures of the Churches Abroad. And that, continues he, so far, as that some of our Men (as I have heard) ordained in Foreign Parts have been pronounc'd no Lawful Ministers. My Lord Bacon wonder'd that a Minister who was ordain'd in France, Geneva or Holland. and consequently cou'd have an Episcopal Ordination, should not be deem'd a lawful Minister; Yet your Lordships have liv'd to hear it preach'd and printed with the utmost confidence, that not only their own Ordination is not valu'd, but all the Exercise of the Ministerial Functions is in them of no force nor vertue. The Lord Verulam proceeds: Let us remember that the Antient and true Bounds of Unity, are one Faith, one Baptism, and not one Ceremony, one Policy, and endeavour to comprehend that saying, *Differentia Rituum commendat Unitatem Doctrinae*. Christ's Coat was indeed without seam, yet the Churches Garment was of divers Colours; Nor must we forget the Testimony born by that noble and gallant Person, the Lord Falkland to this Divine Truth. He is talking of some Doctors, whose Zeal and Heat had out run their Judgment and Duty, and whose Error is but too prevalent in these our divided and distracted Times. A little search will find them to have been the Destruction of Unity, under pretence of Uniformity; to have brought in Superstition and Scandal under Title of Reverence and Decency, to have slack'd the strictness of Unity, which was between us and those of our own Religion beyond the Seas. Soerates informs us, that in his Time there cou'd scarce be found two Churches that us'd the same forms of Prayers. In France the Ritual of Paris differ'd from that of Anjou, and in England we had our Devotions, *secundum usum Sarum* & *secundum usum, Bangor, &c.* yet the one never reproach'd the other as Sectaries and Schismaticks. Will it therefore seem reasonable to Your Lordships to take from Protestant Dissenters the greatest comfort of Humane Life, the pleasure that tender Parents take in giving their Children what they think is the most Vertuous and Religious Education, and force them to give them up to Ignorance, and what they are so unhappy as to conceive to be Error, and that in so necessary a Point as their Present and Eternal Happiness*



Happines or Misery. What my Lords, is this less then Persecution, of which our Holy Church has declar'd an Abhorrence ? They must not teach their Children themselves, nor must others teach them what they think wou'd contribute most to give them a sober and Religious Education. A persecuting Spirit is as contrary to a Christian one, as Hell is to Heaven ; And whether the shutting up so many Schools, and turning so many Thousand poor innocent Children loose to a Wild and Corrupted World, will not be thought Persecution by all our Neighbouring Protestants, and even by sober Papists. I leave it to your Lordship's to judge.

I have made use of no Authorities but of such Persons as are reckon'd among the most Orthodox, and as eminent for their Zeal for the Church of *England*, as for their Learning and Merit. I might multiply them add *Infinitum*, but it is needless. Your Lordships not only know them all already, but the Truth is so Self-evident it needs only to be shewn to carry with it Conviction. The mischievous Consequences of making Three or Four Hundred Thousand Families uneasy and perhaps Miserable, are so apparent and terrible that even Schism itself has nothing in it so dreadful. It is very well known from what Quarter this Cloud that hangs over the Heads of our Protestant Brethren the Dissenters rose. There have been ever since the Reformation, Men among us that wou'd draw us back nearer and nearer to the Old Way and insensibly return us to Popery: This cou'd not openly be attempted. And therefore the Oppressing those Protestants who have thrown themselves farthest off from the Romish Idolatry, has been thought the most effectual way to weaken and at last to destroy the Protestant Interest, even by means which honest Papists have detested ; as one may see sufficiently in a Letter written on purpose by Cardinal *Camus*, Bishop of *Grenoble* to the Intendant of *Dauphine*, who had receiv'd Orders from the *French King* to be communicated to that Prelate for raising a Persecution in his Diocess. This Learned Bishop was so far from obeying the repeated Orders of the Court, that he Publish'd his Reasons against Persecution in general,

general, proving the unlawfulness of using Force in matters of Religion. This Letter which was Printed in most of the Languages in *Europe*, has doubtless been seen by your Lordships, and besides it is too long to be incerted in these few Pages. I hope I shall be pardon'd for making use of this Peice of Modern History to prove what a Detestation the honest Papists of *France* had of Persecuting the *Hugonots* their Country Men for Conscience Sake. But the Jesuits, the Bigots and the Court directed by *Le Chaise*, were so exasperated against the Cardinal, that they got an Order from the King to have him sent Prisoner to the *Bastille*, and that Order had been obey'd had it not been for the Duke of *Montausier*, who was then Governor to the Dauphin. This Lord hearing of what Peril his Friend the Bishop of *Grenoble* was possted from *Diepe* to *Paris*, and by the Ascendant, his singular Merit had got over the King, diverted the Stroke that threaten'd him. The Cardinal wrote the Duke a Letter of Thanks for so obliging an Act of Friendship, and the Answer the Duke sent him containing in it some very Remarkable Passages which have all some Relation to us, and the Matter in Debate, I'm satisfy'd your Lordships will not be displeas'd to read it here.

Right Reverend Father.

**T**IS the only injury Your Lordship's Goodness is capable of doing me to offer me Thanks for what service I and all Mankind are oblig'd to do to a Person of your Sacred Character, singular Learning and exemplary Piety. And I may persume to add the Friendship wherewith you have been always pleas'd to Honour me, did render all the Service that was in my Power an Indispensable only. Not only so, but the Merit of your Cause did require a just concern in me, who have the Honour to be of the same Opinion with yourself, as to the unlawfulness of Persecution on account of Religion. I never flinted my self in that freedom which seems to be imprinted in my Nature whenever I had occasion to tell my Mind, as to the present Method us'd against those of the pretended Re-form'd Religion. For the Religious Reasons against these late new Methods of bringing them into the Church, your Lordship has in your Letter to the Intendant said so much and so well, that it were but, bringing a Candle to  
the



the Sun for me to add any thing. But my Lord, it may be forgiven to a Man of my Character to produce some Politick Reasons why those Violent Methods shou'd not be used, and if I were to write to any but you, I wou'd give them at large, only in short, the King the Government, the People, and even those of the Catholick Religion will be Irreparable losers by it; the King, will suffer in a mighty Decrease of his Revenue, the Government in a loss of a vast number of Soldiers, and expert Seamen, and the rest of the Catholick Subjects themselves in the certain decay of Trade that must necessarily attend the Ruin of the Calvists who understand it best. The Representation that is made to the King of the fitness of the Thing from the Powerfulness of the Calvists; and how easily they can turn the Scale in the Case of a Civil War had never any weight on me. For on the contrary, I think it were better Policy to perscribe a Third Party that may prove a Poize in Case of Divisions happening upon a Minority, or arising from Disgust of Princes of the Blood, and this the rather that the Calvists have of late shew'd their Inclination to the Royal Side to its great Advantage, and that there is none of the Blood now of that Perswasion. The other great insinuation which is most reiterated by the Confessor, and the rest of his Order, is the present favourable juncture in England, and I confess myself to be short sighted, to see so far as these Gentlemen pretend to. For my part, I can never be brought to think that if ever the Duke of York were on the Throne, these their designs can be brought about: considering the Temper of the English, and their view of the Protestant Succession in the Princess of Orange. And that if these far-fetch'd Politicks could take effect, I cannot see what mighty advantages such a change in England would bring to us. My Lord, I need not explain any thing further to your Lordship upon this subject; only I shall say, I hope never to be frighted out of my Opinion by the great Pretensions to Zeal for the Catholick Church; these they pretend to, since I am as much for the Propagation of Religion in a warrantable way as any of them. I recommend myself to your fatherly blessing, and I shall embrace all occasions to tell the World how much I am.

May it please your Reverend Grandeur;  
Your Reverence's most humble Servant,  
Paris, December, 3. 1684.

MONTAUSIER.



That this was the Sense of all the unbigotted Papists of *France*, appears in the History of that Kingdom. In the last Assembly of the States, the Third Order or Commons were for securing to the *French* Protestants the Enjoyment of their Native Rights and Privileges, as well as indulging their Consciences. The Edicts of *Henry IV.* *Lewis XIII.* and *Lewis XIV.* began with Preambles, setting forth the Justice of the Liberties they granted to Protestants, and they had been in Possession of them Seventy Years before so great Disturbance was given them as to have any the least Restraint put upon them in the Enducation of their Children.

That it has always been the Sense of the Church of *England* not to persecute and oppress for Conscience-sake, will not be disputed by its good and reasonable Members. Those who have asserted other Principles have been always a Dishonour to her by the Corruption of their Morals, for which they pretended to atone by the Purity of their Doctrine. This Matter is set in a very good Light by one of her bravest Champions, the late Earl of *Warrington*, who declar'd himself ready to lay down his Life in her Defence. It is in a Speech of his Lordship's to the Grand-Jury at *Chester*, about Twenty Years ago, which being a loose Paper, and probably not in every one's Hands, I shall take the Liberty to borrow from it what is for my Purpose.

“ The next Deceit (*says his Lordship*) by which the  
 “ Nation was to be gull'd into Popery and Slavery,  
 “ was by fomenting Divisions among Protestants, and  
 “ especially about the Terms of *Communion*, making  
 “ them so strict and narrow as to exclude the greatest  
 “ Part of the Protestants in *England* and nine Parts in  
 “ ten of the rest of the World.

“ That this was not to promote God's Glory and  
 “ the Salvation of Mens Souls, but to serve some

“ NEW DESIGN, is clear to me from several  
 “ Reasons.

“ *First*, Because the Laws against Dissenters were  
 “ stretched and executed beyond their genuine and  
 “ natural Intent or Construction. Where fair Play  
 “ is intended, such Tricks are altogether needless;  
 “ but daily Experience proves, That when they are  
 “ made use of, some other Thing is design'd than  
 “ what is pretended. True Religion needs no such  
 “ Methods to support it, the Nature of which is Peace  
 “ and Charity; and besides, such forced Constructi-  
 “ ons being nothing less than *summum jus* are abhor'd  
 “ by our Laws, and are look'd upon as no less than  
 “ *summa Injuria*, the highest Injustice.

“ *Secondly*, The second Reason for my Opinion, is,  
 “ Because that several Laws were put in Execution  
 “ against the Dissenters, as was more plainly and di-  
 “ rectly made for other Purposes, by which the Law  
 “ it self suffer'd Violence; and so it became evident  
 “ to every Man that had a mind to see, that some foul  
 “ Design, and not the Church, was the bottom of the  
 “ Business.

“ *Thirdly*, Another Reason is this, Because more  
 “ Diligence and Care was employ'd to punish People  
 “ for *Non-conformity*, than to reform their *Lives* and  
 “ *Manners*: For if a Man was openly wicked and de-  
 “ bauch'd, and very scarce, if ever, saw the inside of  
 “ a Church, yet if he could talk loud and swagger  
 “ bravely for the Church, and storm against, and  
 “ pull the Dissenters to pieces, he was cry'd up by all  
 “ means for a good Son of the Church, an honest  
 “ Man, and truly affectionate to the Government,  
 “ while those that cou'd not come up to all the Cere-  
 “ monies enjoyn'd in the *Rubrick*, tho' their Lives in  
 “ all other Respects were upright, and their Conver-  
 “ sations unblameable, yet were call'd Villains and  
 “ Rogues, and Enemies to the Government.

I, with

I, with all possible Duty and Veneration, most humbly beg of your Lordships to consider how far this is the Case at present, and whether this is not the Picture and Language of the condemn'd Doctor, and the Men of his Principles, whether the intended Severity is aim'd at the good of the Souls of Men, or whether it is from Interest Malice and Revenge? And as your Lordship, out of your known Goodness and Wisdom, cannot avoid giving such a Matter its due Consideration; the Dissenters may hope for that Justice which is inseparable from your Religion and Characters. My Lord *Warrington* goes on :

“ As if the Outside and Ceremonious Part of Religion was more to be valued than the Substance and  
 “ Essence of it ; which puts me in mind of a Passage  
 “ I have met with in a Play ; it is worth your hearing,  
 “ if I do not spoil it in the telling, it is in the Play  
 “ called, *Sir Courtly Nice*, betwixt two Persons, one  
 “ is called Mr. *Hot-head*, a very idle profligate Fellow,  
 “ but who yet sets up for a very great Son of the  
 “ Church, and cannot think with Patience of any  
 “ thing that inclines to *Moderation* ; the other is called  
 “ Mr. *Testimony*, as rigid and ridiculously Squeamish  
 “ on the other Hand in his Way. These two  
 “ falling into a great Dispute about their Opinions,  
 “ *Hot-head*, out of his great Zeal to the Church, treats  
 “ Mr. *Testimony* with very scurrilous Language and  
 “ bitter Invectives against him and all Dissenters,  
 “ as that they were the Plagues of the State, and that  
 “ he hop'd to see them all hang'd, and declares the  
 “ mighty Concern he has for the Church. To which  
 “ *Testimony* replies, Pray, good Mr. *Hot-head* forbear  
 “ your indecent Language, you are rude in your Expressions ;  
 “ What need you trouble your self about the Church, seeing you  
 “ your self never go to Church. To which *Hot-head*, in a great  
 “ Fury, presently makes Answer with a horrid Oath, What tho' I do  
 “ not go to Church, yet I am for the Church. This, Gentlemen,  
 “ I believe you and every Man else can easily apply.



“ I cou’d never yet meet with any Pretence in all  
 “ the Gospel, that justifies such Proceedings as I have  
 “ mention’d ; but there are several that expresly con-  
 “ demns. To me it seems altogether inconsistent  
 “ with that Charity which is expected to be found in  
 “ all those that hope to enter into Heaven; only it  
 “ seems to be no less than teaching *for Doctrine the Tra-*  
 “ *ditions of Men* and adding to God’s Word, which is  
 “ prohibited under no less Penalty than that of  
 “ Damnation.

“ I am far from being against Order and Decency  
 “ to be observ’d in the Church ; yet under that Pre-  
 “ tence, we are not to forget the Rule of Cha-  
 “ rity; and I cannot see wherefore *those should be*  
 “ *Terms of Communion, that are not Terms of Salvation;*  
 “ I was always of Opinion, that it would never go  
 “ well with *England*, till every Man might worship  
 “ God in his own Way ; for nothing can be more  
 “ unreasonable than to expect, that a Man should  
 “ believe otherwise, than according to the Con-  
 “ viction that is upon him, or that one Man’s Opi-  
 “ nion should be a Rule or Guide to another Man’s  
 “ Conscience.

It will not need any Reflection from the *Premises*,  
 That it is not Christian-like to impose our own Guides,  
 on other Men’s Conscience. It surely is as much  
 against the Precepts of Scripture, to deprive them of  
 their Civil Rights and Priviledges of Nature, in the  
 Education of their Children. But neither in this,  
 nor in any other Part of this Discourse, do I pretend  
 to insist on my own Sentiments ; I approach your  
 Lordships with those of some great Men’s not unwor-  
 thy of being maturely weigh’d by you ; I shall con-  
 clude, what I shall take from the Earl of *Waring-*  
*ton*, with two or three more Paragraphs of his  
 Speech. “ And therefore I cannot but wonder at  
 “ those who take Offence at the Late Act of *Indulgence*,  
 “ which tends so much to our Peace, by quieting  
 “ the

“ the Minds of the People, as to their Religion,  
 “ which has yet been the Handle to our Intestine  
 “ Troubles. The *Incendiaries* of the State having  
 “ ever made use of it, as the best Pretence to embroil  
 “ the Nation. For my Part, I think, the Act of  
 “ Indulgence was a necessary and pious Word, and can-  
 “ not imagine why any Man should think that to be  
 “ a Disservice to the Church, that tends to the Peace  
 “ of the Nation. They who do so, I must Believe,  
 “ *are not much concern'd in the Cause of the Church, and*  
 “ *their Country, and care not what is uppermost, pro-*  
 “ *vided they can but make fair Weather for them-*  
 “ *selves.*

“ Wherefore, Gentlemen, if any speak to the Dis-  
 “ vantage of the Act of Indulgence, you ought to  
 “ present them as disaffected to the Government, and  
 “ sowers of the Seeds of Division in the State.

“ But I desire to be rightly understood ; I do not  
 “ say this to dissuade any Man from coming to  
 “ the Church, for I go constantly thither myself, and  
 “ I wish every body could do it as easily as I do ;  
 “ and I wonder 'tis otherwise ; for I never yet heard  
 “ any good Reason for the practising the con-  
 “ trary.

Had not this Noble Peer been as true a Son of  
 the Church, as he professes himself to be, I should  
 not have troubled your Lordships with any Thing of  
 his ; but really what he says is so true, so sincere,  
 and agrees so well with what we have seen with  
 our Eyes, and heard with our Ears, that I could not  
 forbear making Use of his Reflections, preferable to  
 those of many others, who have made more Noise  
 in the Learned World. If the Sentiments of King  
*Charles*, and King *James* the Second ; of the Parlia-  
 ment, in the Reign of the former of the Prelates,  
 in the Reign of King *James*, and the Parliament  
 in that of King *William*, are of Weight with  
 those who wish well to our Church, either for their  
 Sakes,

Sakes, or the Church's, we shall find that our Kings, our Parliaments, and our Bishops, have been for further indulging the Dissenters, rather than for abridging them of any of the Rights they now enjoy.

King *Charles* the Second, in his Declarations of Indulgence to tender Consciences, in 1664, and 1672, Professes his Opinion to be against laying Hardships on Dissenters, or giving them any manner of Trouble for Scruple of Conscience, and the Indulgence he gave them, he declar'd to be out of Principle. The Glorious Votes of the Two *Westminster* Parliaments, after the Discovery of the Popish Plot, asserted this Principle of Liberty of Conscience, and that it was the Birth-right of every *British* Protestant, which Liberty is of two extensive a Nature, to be confin'd to the Parents, and not to the Children. King *James* the Second, whose Judgment will doubtless be of Importance with those, who are against the Dissenters, chiefly for their being so unanimously against him, and his pretended Son, This King, I say, in the Speech he made to his Council, a little before he put out his Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, told them, he had observ'd, " That whatever Endeavours had been us'd, in the Reign of the four Princes, his Predecessors, to establish an Uniformity of Religion, though the Authority of Parliament had interpos'd, and Laws had been made for that Purpose, yet all those Measures were useless, and even hurtful to the Nation, as had been so unhappily experienced, in the Reign of the King, his Father; that the Rigors exercis'd against Nonconformists, had rather increased than diminish'd their Number, and that nothing could contribute so much to the Peace and Welfare of the Nation, as Liberty of Conscience. That it had always been his Opinion, that no body should be persecuted for his Religion and Conscience ought not to be forc'd. I will not look back into the Addresses which follow'd that Declaration of Liberty of Conscience,

as



as well because I never laid any great Stress on those Things, as because those of the Church of *England* who made such Addresses, were not of the best Character; but those that approv'd of the Indulgence of opening the Dissenter's Meeting-Houses, and Schools were surely such, for we find the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, Bishop of *St. Asaph*, Bishop of *Bath and Wells*, Bishop of *Chichester*, Bishop of *Ely*, Bishop of *Peterborough*, and Bishop of *Bristol*, telling his Majesty, after the opening of those Schools, and Meeting-Houses, *That they wanted no due Tendernefs towards Dissenters, but were willing to come to such a Temper as should be thought fit, when that Matter should be consider'd and settled in Parliament and Convocation.* After King *William* had delivered these Nations from the Destruction that threatened them, and the Act of Indulgence was past, how many of the Reverend Clergy fell heartily in with the Project of Comprehension to take these *Schismatics*, into the Church, by humouring them in the Scruples that made the *Schism*. Was not my Lord Bishop of *London* so zealous for the Accomplishment of that Christian and Generous Design, that he spoke for it in the Upper-House of Convocation, of which he was then President in Answer to Dr. *Janes's* Speech, of *Nolite Leges Angliæ Mutari*; saying, *They ought to come to some Temper with the Non-conformists, in Matters that were not material to Religion, that they might give Entrance into the Church to a great Number of People; That they should have some Indulgence for them, as the Bishops had promis'd the late King James in their Address,* closing his Discourse with the Words of *Joseph* to his Brethren, *Ne tumultuarium in Concliis Vestris.* And is this the Temper, this the Indulgence which that great Prelate recommended? and did not my Lord *Nottingham*, whose Zeal for the Service of the Church, is as eminent as his Ability to carry to the Convocation his Majesty's Letter, recommending that Design, which his Lordship seconded, with a long and eloquent Speech to the same Purpose.

Had

Had any One in those happy Times offer'd to a bridge them of any Part of their Natural Rights and Liberties, What would the World have said of such an ungrateful Attempt? Would not those Persons have been look'd upon as Friends to Popery and Slavery, and hating them purely for their Hatred to Tyranny and Idolatry?

That it was the Sense of the Lords and Commons of *England*, to treat them as Brethren, and not as Enemies, will appear by their Address to King *William*, in 1689. to return his Majesty Thanks for his Protection of the Church of *England*, which they clos'd with, *Assuring his Majesty 'twas their Intention to proceed immediately to consider of Means to give Relief to Protestant Dissenters. And the King in his truly most gracious Answer told them. He hop'd the Relief they intended to give the Protestant Dissenters would contribute very much to the strengthening of the Church, and for that Reason he recommended earnestly to them, to banish all occasion of Difference and Animosity.* The People of *England* had just been deliver'd from the common Danger of Popery and Slavery, that Danger had United them, and their Compassion for one another remov'd the bitterness of Spirit by which the *Hot-heads* for King *Charles*, and King *James's* Reign were animated.

There was very early after the Revolution, a Cry of the *Church's Danger*, But who made it? was it not the *Jacobites*, and their abettors, who are the only Enemies of our Protestant Church. Their Principles, if they have any, necessarily lead them to a *French* Successor, and a *French* Government, and when they have so far blinded *English* Protestants as to make them either by their Folly or their Malice, to fall in with their Measures, then indeed will our poor Church be in the worst of Dangers, For she will have no Prince of *Orange* to deliver Her, We shall have been found so ungrateful to our last Deliverer, we shall never be thought worth Deliverance more; Indeed  
if



if it was not the common Interest of *Europe* to save us from Popish Pretenders, I can't think our Neighbours would be at a Minutes Trouble, or at a Penny Expence about us, if ever which, God forbid, our groundless Animosities should so weaken us that we should become a Prey to our Common Enemy the Papists.

Your Lordships are fully appriz'd of all the fatal Effects which have attended Persecution and Oppression for Conscience sake. And enough has been said on Schism, and the Duty of Charity among Protestants. If we consider'd this politically only, a Consideration however too mean for your Lordship's Piety, it would be sufficient to fright every good Protestant from contributing to the Publick Loss and Misery by bringing so much Damage to Trade as it must do, when the greatest Trading Part of the Nation have no Way left them to breed up their Children to Trades and Callings, but by Means which whether they are, or are not in Error I shall not dispute, they think will tend to the Peril of their Salvation. And in some degree they are not in the wrong, for if they abandon their Children to an Education which they believe will instill such Principles into them as they could not embrace without Sin, They will surely sin as much in doing it for a Temporal Interest as if it really was a Sin; And the laying such a Hardship upon them, a Hardship not to be met with among those that drove many Thousands of them to the Wildernesses of *America*, by the severe Discipline of that fiery Prelate Bishop *Laud*, cannot fail of having as bad Effects to Trade as had the furious Temper and Bigotry of that Arch-bishop.

It has been objected to those that have been for carrying a high Hand in Church Matters, that they are Enemies to Trade, because Trade has been a Friend to Moderation and Liberty, and therefore has it always been oppress'd by the Men that are for persecuting the Dissenters. This is prov'd too

D

plainly



plainly in a little Tract called *Torism and Trade can never agree*, but since that I have met with an Older Charge of this Kind on the same Party who for their want of Charity and Virtue, are in my esteem the most dangerous Sect among Britains. *Enlargement of Trade*, says One of these pretended Champions of the Church, *has usually been attended with as much Latitude of Conscience and the heat of that, with as much coldness and indifferency in Religion, 'tis commonly observ'd to introduce great diversity of Opinion, and consequently too little of Mens Zeal for the Reverence of an Uniformity in what was before establish'd.* I must confess the Answer to this notable Objection against Trade has too much Levity in it, and therefore could not with decency, on any other Occasion be laid before your Lordships. But tho' there is a little too much keenness in the Wit of it, the Strength of the Reason, will I hope make amends for it. The Answerer replies thus.

“ Therefore better the Publick were undone, Mens  
 “ Parts and Wits made as dull as a Beetle, Foreign  
 “ Discoveries left to the pragmatistical *Dutch*, all Com-  
 “ merce with other Worlds interrupted, and the *Bri-*  
 “ *tains* once again Excommunicated from the rest of  
 “ Mankind, better a Thousand Times Mens Fortunes  
 “ and Hearts were broken, the Glory of the Nation  
 “ stain'd, its Strength shatter'd, the Exchequer ex-  
 “ hausted, than Uniformity in some little Things  
 “ endanger'd, one Ceremony disparag'd, the Wills of  
 “ some Clergy-men crost, &c. Again, And to speak  
 “ the Truth, all the great Ends of Trade might be se-  
 “ cured by Ceremonies, and an exact Uniformity in  
 “ them, for it will wonderfully sharpen Mens Wits  
 “ to find out every Day some happy new Conceit.  
 “ Society will be maintain'd by being all of a Piece  
 “ at home, and instead of Foreign Discoveries an  
 “ Inquisition will better search out the Terra In-  
 “ cognita of Conscience, &c. Again, It was seasonably  
 “ and well thought on to Propound to us the Wisdom  
 “ *the Lacedemonians, who that the Laws and Govern-*  
 “ *ment*

" ment might not be disturb'd with Novelty, the Words  
 " of the Person he Answers, did absolutely forbid  
 " Trade or Traffick, or so much as Travelling into other  
 " Countries, that the Citizens should not barter away their  
 " own Laws and Customs for those of other Cities. But  
 " then I doubt says the Answerer, their Laws were a-  
 " bout the great Things that concern'd the Nation's  
 " Being : They did not make Laws that every Man's  
 " Hair should be of a length, and then swear the Peo-  
 " ple to observe them, and forbid Trade lest they  
 " should bring in the *Geneva* Cut and destroy Perukes,  
 " Besides all this, they prohibited Travel as well  
 " as Trade. And how to restrain Travel deserves  
 " more consideration, therefore let it be remembered,  
 " that Trade and Travel are no otherwise Evil than  
 " in their mischievous Consequence, and could we se-  
 " perate the grand Inconveniencies from them, they  
 " would not be mortal : Seeing then we Trade  
 " more into *Holland*, and Travel more into *Italy*  
 " simple Travel cannot be so destructive as com-  
 " pounded Trade.

The Occasion of considering this Subject, and  
 the Consequence of it is so solemn that it will not al-  
 mit of Jestings, or I might have diverted the World  
 with his Ludicrous manner of handling it, for  
 there is nothing can be so monstrous and absurd as  
 that we should not encourage Trade for fear of Schism,  
 And if it is our Wisdom and Interest to encourage  
 it, shou'd we cripple it in the hands of those who best  
 love and understand it to trust it to such as have  
 neither Affection or Ability to support it.

There is no free Nation in the World but has al-  
 ways even for Political Ends given Encouragement  
 to this Freedom of Conscience for which we now  
 contend : 'Tis True, this Freedom as to Worship is  
 not abridg'd in *Britain*; the Christianity, Humanity,  
 and Generosity of the *British* Nation, have trium-  
 ph'd over the Bigotry and Interest of Party, and to use  
 a Phrase that has been much reflected upon, restor'd

to God his Empire over Conscience; but whether that Empire will not be invaded by confining it to his Worship only, and compelling an Obedience to the Injunctions of Man, in the most important Point of Christian Life, which we need not tell your Lordships is that of Education is very well worth the Reflection of those who are concern'd for the Liberty of a Protestant Nation.

It has been observ'd, that no People live so happy as in those Countries where Liberty of Conscience is allow'd to those who differ in Opinion from the National Church; and on the contrary, no Government is so uneasy, and no People so unhappy as in those Places where there is Persecution on account of Religion. Of the Latter, the Kingdom of *Spain* and the other Monarchies of *Europe*, where the Inquisition has got Footing, is a terrible Example. And what has *France* acquir'd by revoking the free Exercise of a Religion different from the National one but Poverty and Slavery? and to what can one ascribe the growing Greatness of *France* ever since about the latter End of *Henry IV's* Reign till of late Years but to the Toleration of both Religions confirm'd by the Edict of *Nantz*? Nor is it the least Cause of the mighty Figure the States of *Holland* make in *Europe*, that they allow no Severity upon the account of any Religion whatever, tho' opposite to that which is Establish'd as the Religion of the Country.

The Popish Princes who have been eminent for Wisdom and Virtue, have always follow'd the same healing and Charitable Measures. The last Elector *Palatine*, tho' himself a strong Papist in his Principles, yet he never wou'd let the Balance between the two Religions in his Territories to be unequal; Protestants and Papists entertain'd the most Friendly Correspondence with one another, imitating the Moderation of their Prince. No Terms of Reproach, no bitter Invectives were heard of on either side; such Priests as the condemn'd Doctor, or the Doctor of  
*White-*



*Whitechapel*, who shou'd like them, have turn'd their Doctrines of Peace into Lectures of Rage and Discord, wou'd have been made severe Examples of his Justice, as was an Officer of his own Guards, who for insulting the Protestant Meeting-House, tho' he pretended himself had the first Provocation, was hang'd, and no Intercession cou'd obtain his Pardon; notwithstanding that he neither demolish'd the Conventicle, nor wounded any of the Congregation: But that Elector as a true Father of his People, tho' himself was of the same Religion with the Criminal; tho' Nine Parts in Ten of his Subjects were also of it, yet he wou'd not be prevail'd upon by any Consideration but that of strict Justice, to which he gave no mean Fellow, no Captain of the Mob, but a Soldier, an Officer near his own Person, rather than let his Dissenting Subjects complain that Right had not been done them, and the Man that had made an Attempt on their Meeting-house been punish'd.

I doubt not but it will be objected, That there is no kind of Intention to break a *Toleration* that has been so often declar'd *Inviolable*, and that the forcing Dissenters to send their Children to such Church Schools as they can get for Them, is not at all like Persecution, or breaking the Toleration. I dare not be so impertinent as to offer your Lordships Reasons against these Objections, they will at the first View appear to your Lordships with all their Weaknesses and Absurdities; and indeed, One should consult the Dissenters themselves in this Case, and ask a tender Parent, who has more Concern for the Salvation of his Child's Soul, than for the Interests of his Body, Whether he does not think himself persecuted when he is compell'd to abandon his Child to the Tuition of a Teacher whose Principles he denies, and whose Morals he detests, as must unavoidably be the hard Hap of many of them.

I can;

I cannot help observing to your Lordships, that if there is no other Hardships design'd against the Dissenters, If we stop here, this will be very far from answering the severe and uncharitable Ends of the Promoters of it. 'Twill indeed deprive fond Fathers and Mothers, of the Pleasure of seeing their Children bred up near them, and of being sometimes visited by them. But then it will save them the Expence of a Seminary Education, much dearer than that of *Aberdeen* or *Leyden*, whether good Husbandry has sent such as could not well bear the Charge of an expensive School at Home. And one need not be blest with a Gift of Prophecy, to foretel that, unless they are hinder'd from sending their Children abroad, as well as breeding them at Home, according to their Consciences, there will not be a Dissenting Student the less for this Law to prevent it Oppression, and they will doubtless give that hard Name to such Usage, never yet made a sincere Convert, and a Convert that is not sincere, never did the Church or Himself any Good. If this Sort of Breeding, which is to finish the grown Youth for the World, is not to be hinder'd, but by making it as dangerous to export Dissenters, as to send Bullion Abroad, Though a Person that is Noble by good Luck, was pleas'd to swear *we should cramp 'em now*, in a Place where Oaths are seldom given or taken, yet 'tis certainly but a poor Triumph to monopolize the Use of Hornbooks and Psalters, for the Benefit of Orthodox School-Mistresses. If Children are not to learn the Assemblies Catechism, we shall be under a Necessity of making a new one, or forcing them also to be Re-baptized, and get Godfathers and Godmothers, else how will they be able to make the Responses which are in that Case requir'd. I cannot help quitting a little the serious Air which such a Treatise requires ; there is something so merry and mean, as well as uncharitable and unkind, in this Attempt. *Dryden*, in his Hind and Panther, where he insolently says of our Church.

*To Foreign Lands no Sound of her is come,  
Is oblig'd by the Strength and Light of Reason to ac-  
Of all the Tyrannies on human Kind, ( knowledge ;  
The worst is that which persecutes the Mind.*

And he tells us in his Preface, *That the Doctrine of Persecution is far from being an Article of the Catholick Faith, Conscience is the Royalty and Prerogative of every private Man.* Though we have by terrible Experience seen, that the Doctrine of Persecution is the first Article of the Catholick Faith, yet we see also, they are themselves asham'd of it, and deny it as often as it is not their Interest to assert it. And Protestants whole Faith and Doctrine are guided by the Rule of Scripture, ought much more to be asham'd of Practises that are deny'd even by the very Papists.

As we are a Free Nation, and govern'd only by Laws, and as the Dissenters are Christians as well as those of the Establish'd Religion, how can we deprive them of any Part of that Freedom which is their Birth-right, and yet think that there is no Breaches made on Liberty, which as *Matchiavel* says, *Consists in the Enjoyment of Property in security of a Man's Estate, and to fear nothing for his Wife and Children.* Is it possible for a Dissenter to fear nothing for his Children when he is oblig'd to give them up to the Education of those whom he believes will breed them up in Error. It has been the Policy of the Church of *Rome* to take especial care to have their Children bred up in *Romish* Ignorance, that by blinding their Judgment, they may blind also their Obedience as *Puffendorf* observes. *In these Schools which are under the Popish Clergy, the Principles of true Policy are either neglected or at least so disfigur'd that they may not be hurtful to the Authority of the Pope, but rather serve to support it* I do not pretend to so much Penetration as to look into the Hearts  
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of the Promoters of this new Attempt against the *Dis-senters*, or to determine whether they have not a View quite different from what is given out in engrossing the Education of all the Children in *England*. But it is obvious enough how far such a Monopoly may serve to support Authority which as yet our Constitution rejects, and be a Means for those who are Lovers of that which is without Limits to obtain their Ends. Thus this Affair has no Face but what is new and disagreeable to a Protestant, and an *English* Man, and consequently will be thought an Innovation very inconsistent with the Liberty for which we have been disputing with our Arms and our Purse these Five and Twenty Years.

I have wonder'd at the extream Ignorance of the Generality of *Churchmen*, concerning the indifferency of the Matter in dispute between them and the *Dis-senters*. This Ignorance has been so far improv'd by ill designing Men, that they are look'd upon as Infidels. I have heard it often objected by Men of not the meanest Figures, that such a one was not a *Protestant*, *he was a Presbyterian*. and this is as Common as the Notion that all *Whigs* are *Phanaticks*, and that even some of your Lordships who have distinguish'd yourselves as much by your Zeal and Service to the Church, as the most zealous and renown'd of your Predecessors are *Presbyterians*, because you are not *Persecutors*. This Mistake which borders very near on stupidity is not unlike that in which the Papist Priests breed their People abroad, by whom we are look'd upon as Barbarians and Infidels. When King *James* declar'd himself so openly in Favour of Popery, the News was receiv'd with wonderful joy at *Rome*, and *Misson* tells us that a *Roman* Gentleman told him in a sort of Extasy, *That the King of England was turn'd Christian*. This Ignorance of the Doctrine of the *Dis-senters* not only prevails among the Vulgar sort, the great have given into it, and taken up a Belief, upon Trust, that they are some of the very worst of

*Schismaticks*



*maticks*, and I wou'd rather be a *Papist*, than a *Presbyterian*, is an Expression that has drop'd from the Mouths of more Clergy-men than the Doctor and his Brother of Ireland. Your Lordships are fully inform'd of the Grounds and Principles of Tender Consciences, and that it has been the Imposing of some Things since the *Reformation*, which probably was not design'd to be continu'd for Ever by the first *Reformers*, For tho' the Dissenters are charg'd with Novelty by some illiterate, unthinking People, it is well known to Persons of the most moderate Knowledge in Church-History, that their Scruples are as old as the *Reformation*; and consequently, as old as the Reform'd Church of *England*; and that Endeavours have been us'd at several Times to ease them of them, which perhaps had not been so unsuccessful, if the Reasons that had frustrated the good Effect of the *Savoy Conference*, had not always hinder'd it; which have more regard to the *Interest of Particulars*, than to the *Peace of the Publick*.

When some Time after, the great Sticklers for *Uniformity* brought a Bill into Parliament for a Test, that the Takers of it should never consent to any Alterations in Church-Matters. Out of Complaisancy to *Dissenters*, there happen'd a very long and warm Contest. For tho' those may be with much more Reason call'd the worst of Times, when we were Pensioners to *France* than afterwards when we were her Conquerors, yet then there was such a struggle in Favour of Moderation and Charity, that the Bill came to nothing. It may not have happen'd in every one's Way to have met with that Debate which however is not a very great Secret. I shall therefore touch upon a Passage or two in it, and the rather because there is something that has some Relation to the present Point.

A Noble Lord urg'd, That it is a far different Thing  
to believe, or to be fully perswaded of the Truth of the  
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of the Promoters of this new Attempt against the *Dissenters*, or to determine whether they have not a View quite different from what is given out in engrossing the Education of all the Children in *England*. But it is obvious enough how far such a Monopoly may serve to support Authority which as yet our Constitution rejects, and be a Means for those who are Lovers of that which is without Limits to obtain their Ends. Thus this Affair has no Face but what is new and disagreeable to a Protestant, and an *English* Man, and consequently will be thought an Innovation very inconsistent with the Liberty for which we have been disputing with our Arms and our Purfes these Five and Twenty Years.

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*Doctrine of our Church, and to swear never to Endeavour to alter; which last must be utterly unlawful, unless infallability was placed in the Church, or a Man's self, he being otherwise oblig'd to alter, whenever a clearer or better Light comes to him; and his Lordship desir'd Leave to ask, Where are the Foundaries, or where shall we find what is meant by the Protestant Religion? For it seems that general Term had been given to our Church, as has been before hinted. To this Noble Lord, the Lord Keeper reply'd very elegantly desiring that it might not be told in Gath, nor publish'd in the Streets of Alcalon, That a Lord of so great Parts and Experience, should not know what is meant by the Protestant Religion. Thus your Lordships well observe, that the Dissenters, the reform'd Churches of France, Geneva, Swisserland, and Holland, of Germany, and the Kingdoms of the North, are not within our Protestant Pale. For with all due Respect to their Sacred Character be it spoken, the then Bishop of Winchester, and several other Prelates, Instructed his Lordship, that the Protestant Religion was comprehended in Thirty-nine Articles, the Liturgy, the Catechism, the Homilies, and the Canons. That the Church of England professes the Protestant Religion is a Truth, which has been known to all Europe above these Hundred and Fifty Years. But that the Protestants of France, &c. did the same without those Articles, that Liturgy, Catechism, Homilies and Canons, is as well known to all Christendom. And our Dissenters agree with the greatest Part of Foreign Protestants, in Doctrine and Discipline, and with the Church of England Protestants in every Thing Essential to the Protestant Religion, as has been observ'd already. The Earl of Shaftsbury, upon Occasion of this Debate, made the following Speech, which as I do not approve in the whole, so neither can I condemn, and shall leave it to better Judgments to determine, whither it has any Weight in it, or not.*

“ His Lordship beg'd so much Charity of the Reverend Fathers, as to believe he knew the Protestant

“stant Religion so well, and was so confirm’d in it,  
 “that he hop’d he should burn for the Witness of it,  
 “if Providence should call him to it. But he might  
 “perhaps think some Things *not necessary*, that they  
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 “Things *not Truth*, or agreeable to Scripture, that  
 “they might call *Doctrines of the Church*. Besides,  
 “then he was to swear never to endeavour to alter  
 “it, was certainly necessary to know how far the  
 “just Extent of this Oath was. But since they had  
 “told him the Protestant Religion was in those *Five*  
 “*Tracts*, he had still to ask, Whether they meant  
 “those whole Tracts were the Protestant Religion, or  
 “only that the Protestant Religion was contained in  
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 “those, then he was extremely in the dark, to find  
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 “dants do. Besides, the 20th Article stating the  
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 “ting Protestants, and less easy to be comply’d  
 “with, upon the Advantage of a Pretence, well  
 “known unto us all of making Alterations as might  
 “the better unite us, instead whereof there is scarce  
 “one Alteration but widens the Breach, and no Or-  
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“ pally Ordain’d, but is required to be Re-ordain’d,  
 “ as much as in us lies *Unchurching* all the *Foreign Pro-*  
 “ *testants* that have no Bishops, tho’ the Contra-  
 “ ry was both allow’d and practis’d from the be-  
 “ ginning of the *Reformation*, till the Time of that  
 “ *Act*, and several Bishops made of such as were  
 “ never ordain’d *Priests by Bishops*. Moreover, the  
 “ *Uncharitableness* of it was so much against the Inte-  
 “ rest of the *Crown and Church of England*, casting of  
 “ the Dependency of the whole Protestant Party a-  
 “ broad, that it wou’d have been bought by the Pope  
 “ and *French King* at a vast Sum of Money, and it is  
 “ difficult to conceive so great an Advantage fell to  
 “ them meerly by Chance, and without their Help ;  
 “ so that he thought to *endeavour to alter* and restore  
 “ the *Liturgy* to what it was in *Queen Elizabeth’s*  
 “ Days, might consist with his being a very good  
 “ Protestant.

“ As to the *Catechism*, he really thought it might  
 “ be *mended*, and durst declare to them, it was not  
 “ well that there was not a better made.

“ For the *Homilies* he thought there might be a bet-  
 “ ter Book made, and the *Third Homily of Repairing*  
 “ *and keeping clean of Churches*, be omitted.

This, my Lords, was said by that noble Member  
 of your most august Assembly, who always went by  
 the Name of the *Protestant Peer* ; this he says of the  
*Act of Uniformity*, recited in the Preamble to this Bill,  
 and of the *Catechism* which is enjoyn’d to be us’d in-  
 stead of that now in Use among the Dissenters, tho’ it  
 contains nothing in it but what is perfectly agreeable  
 to the *Doctrinal Articles* and *Homilies* of the Church of  
*England*, and meddles not with Church-Government  
 and Discipline. The same noble Earl concluded his  
 Speech thus :

“ What is yet stranger than all this, the *Canons* of  
 “ our Church are directly the Old Popish *Canons* which  
 “ are

“ are still in Force, and no other, as will appear if  
 “ you turn to the *Stat. 25. Hen. VIII. Cap. 19.* Con-  
 “ firmed and reviv’d by 1 *Eliz.* where all those  
 “ *Canons* are establish’d, until an Alteration should be  
 “ made by the King in pursuance of that Act ; which  
 “ Thing was attempted by *Edward VI.* but not per-  
 “ fected, and let alone ever since, for what Reasons  
 “ the Lords the Bishops could best tell ; and it was  
 “ very hard to be oblig’d by Oath not to endeavour  
 “ to alter either the *English Common-Prayer-Book*, or  
 “ the *Canon of the Mass* : But if they meant the Lat-  
 “ ter, *That the Protestant Religion is contain’d in all those,*  
 “ *but the Theory Part of those is not the Protestant Religi-*  
 “ *on*, then he apprehended it might be in the Bishops  
 “ Power to declare, *ex post Facto*, what is the Pro-  
 “ testant Religion or not, or else they must leave it to  
 “ every Man to judge for himself what Part of those  
 “ Books are, or are not, &c.

Since this is the Case, and it is the Unhappinefs of  
 the Dissenters to differ from the Church for Scruples  
 about Things that are not of the Essentials of Religi-  
 on, how worthy is it of your Lordships exemplary  
 Piety and Moderation, rather to make them easy un-  
 der former Burthens, than to add new and greater  
 than they have ever yet born.

What can one say of that Part of the Bill by which  
 they are to be subjected to the Will and Pleasure of  
 a few *Justices of the Peace*, a *Tribunal*, that for my  
 Part I would have nothing that I cou’d help be deter-  
 min’d by, But *Roits Larcenies*, &c.

The Vexation the Persecuted *Dissenters* met  
 with from them, in the Times of Persecution under  
 King *Charles*, and King *James* is yet fresh in the Me-  
 mories of Thousands, who cannot without the most  
 afflicting Apprehensions fear a like Misery: How well  
 they are dispos’d to harrass them appears too plain-  
 ly on all Occasions, and when this Disposition is  
 spirited by new Laws and Powers ; when it is plea-  
 sing



“ pally Ordain’d, but is required to be Re-ordain’d,  
 “ as much as in us lies *Unchurching* all the *Foreign Pro-*  
 “ *testants* that have no Bishops, tho’ the Contra-  
 “ ry was both allow’d and practis’d from the be-  
 “ ginning of the *Reformation*, till the Time of that  
 “ *Act*, and several Bishops made of such as were  
 “ never ordain’d *Priests by Bishops*. Moreover, the  
 “ *Uncharitableness* of it was so much against the Inte-  
 “ rest of the *Crown and Church of England*, casting of  
 “ the Dependency of the whole Protestant Party a-  
 “ broad, that it would have been bought by the Pope  
 “ and *French King* at a vast Sum of Money, and it is  
 “ difficult to conceive so great an Advantage fell to  
 “ them meerly by Chance, and without their Help ;  
 “ so that he thought to *endeavour to alter* and restore  
 “ the *Liturgy* to what it was in *Queen Elizabeth’s*  
 “ Days, might consist with his being a very good  
 “ Protestant.

“ As to the *Catechism*, he really thought it might  
 “ be *mended*, and durst declare to them, it was not  
 “ well that there was not a better made.

“ For the *Homilies* he thought there might be a bet-  
 “ ter Book made, and the *Third Homily of Repairing*  
 “ *and keeping clean of Churches*, be omitted.

This, my Lords, was said by that noble Member  
 of your most august Assembly, who always went by  
 the Name of the *Protestant Peer* ; this he says of the  
*Act of Uniformity*, recited in the Preamble to this Bill,  
 and of the *Catechism* which is enjoyn’d to be us’d in-  
 stead of that now in Use among the Dissenters, tho’ it  
 contains nothing in it but what is perfectly agreeable  
 to the *Doctrinal Articles* and *Homilies* of the Church of  
*England*, and meddles not with Church-Government  
 and Discipline. The same noble Earl concluded his  
 Speech thus :

“ What is yet stranger than all this, the *Canons* of  
 “ our Church are directly the *Old Popish Canons* which  
 “ are

“ are still in Force, and no other, as will appear if  
 “ you turn to the *Stat. 25. Hen. VIII. Cap. 19.* Con-  
 “ firmed and reviv’d by 1 *Eliz.* where all those  
 “ *Canons* are establish’d, until an Alteration should be  
 “ made by the King in pursuance of that Act; which  
 “ Thing was attempted by *Edward VI.* but not per-  
 “ fected, and let alone ever since, for what Reasons  
 “ the Lords the Bishops could best tell; and it was  
 “ very hard to be oblig’d by Oath not to endeavour  
 “ to alter either the *English Common-Prayer-Book*, or  
 “ the *Canon of the Mass*: But if they meant the Lat-  
 “ ter, *That the Protestant Religion is contain’d in all those,*  
 “ *but the Theory Part of those is not the Protestant Religi-*  
 “ *on*, then he apprehended it might be in the Bishops  
 “ Power to declare, *ex post Facto*, what is the Pro-  
 “ testant Religion or not, or else they must leave it to  
 “ every Man to judge for himself what Part of those  
 “ Books are, or are not, &c.

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ing to that giddy Outragious Multitude, who have not yet recover'd themselves out of the *Madding Fit* of 1710. What may the cruel Effects be to the *Dissenters*, Offending and Suffering for Conscience sake, too much it may be by the Sentence of Men that have none, as well worth the Consideration of Persons of your Lordships consummate Wisdom, and eminent Virtue, and Christian Charity.

I have already bestow'd some Hours in considering this Matter in *Remarks on a Mercenary Libellers Letter to the Dissenters*, which he, himself a Dissenter, has now Republish'd to animate People against their Protestant Neighbours of a differing Communion. As it was not in that Hireling's Power to clear himself of the Sophistry, Hypocrisy and Falshoods with which he is there charg'd, he has warily avoided entering farther into the Controversy manag'd by him with the basest of Views to gain the Favour of a Party at the Expence of the Destruction of his own, at least, as he still professes himself. His Merit and Character are now so well known, that 'tis sufficient to ruin the Credit of any Work to say it is his, and since he can no longer be serviceable to the Enemies of our Country and Religion, one cannot do better for the future than restore him to his original Obscurity, and leave him to the Contempt, which is the sure Reward of such Baseness and Ingratitude.

I have confin'd myself to the Sentiments of the most Orthodox and Catholick, that they might be the more worthy to be laid before your Lordships, and shall trouble you with nothing more but the honest, plain, and sensible Representation of the *Quakers*, which is the best of that Kind that has yet appear'd.

I. " The Church of England hath frequently declared, by several of her Members, in a Clerical, as well as Civil Capacity, by those who Framed and Espoused one or more of the Bills against Occasional



*casional Conformity, That She is in Principle against  
Persecution, and for Preserving the Toleration.*

II. " The Promoters of this Bill may please to  
Remember, That the Queen hath Declared from  
the Throne, That She will *Maintain the Toleration*  
*Inviolable.*

III. " The Protestant Subjects of this Kingdom,  
who are Parents of Children, are supposed to have  
Preserved to them, by the Fundamental Laws of  
this Kingdom, the Natural Right of the Care and  
Direction of the Education of their own Children ;  
which Natural Right this Bill seems calculated to  
take away and destroy.

IV. " If the Governments, which are now either  
*Heathen* or *Mahometan*, should take into the same  
Policy ; the Society which the Queen hath In-  
corporated for the Propagation of the Gospel in  
Foreign Parts, can have very little, if any good  
Effect or Success.

V. " May it not seem an Objection and Contra-  
diction to the many Princely and Christian Soli-  
citations, which the Queen by her Ministers hath  
made at Foreign Courts, on the Behalf of Prote-  
stants, against the violent Intrusions of Papists in-  
to their Rights and Just Privileges ?

VI. " It may be a means to oblige the Carrying  
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cation.

VII. " It may probably do much Hurt to Charita-  
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VIII. " It seems not to be agreeable to that great  
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